

Links with Sweden Renewed



L-R Ann Smith, John Wallace, Bp Martin, Bp Alan, Pam Wise & Frederik Oloffson

Introducing the signing of a further covenant with the Swedish Church's Diocese of Linköping at Diocesan Synod, Bishop Alan said: "Whatever your views on the current situation and Brexit, I think there is no doubt that there is a vital need for us to strengthen and develop friendships with our brothers and sisters right across our neighbouring countries and of course within churches in those countries. We've been greatly enriched by our links not least with the Caribbean but also with those closer to home in particular the Lutheran Diocese of Linköping."

Bishop Martin spoke about his pleasure at the co-operation between the two diocese and went on to speak about the strategic renewal of parishes in Linköping based on seven movements or shifts in perspective of what a parish is or can be. Changes of perspective lead to people acting differently.

These shifts were:

1. From discouragement to hope. This shifts focus onto what inspires and brings hope.

The next three shifts move the church from being a place

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where people, many employed as staff in the Swedish Church, do things for worshippers to a church where all participate and share tasks together.

2. From a user to a bearer

3. From a producer of activity to a community in life

4. From being performers to enablers.

The next shift seeks to rectify the fragmentation of the church into work done with different age groups.

5. A move from mono-generational work to multi-generational work

The next shift addresses the nature of society that the church is trying to reach:

6. Movement from uniformity to diversity - and finally the means of achieving it.

7. Movement from a focus on the order of the church service to a focus on the community of the church service.

The short address given by the Bishop of Linköping, Bishop Martin Modeus, to Synod amply demonstrated the truth of Bishop Alan's comments about the value of learning from another perspective.

More photos: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsm6gRvDK>